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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/785,000	02/16/2001	Alison Lee	YOR920000110US2	4058

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EXAMINER

PHAM, HUNG Q

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2162

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/785,000

Applicant(s)

LEE ET AL.

Examiner

HUNG Q PHAM

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 December 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 12/08/2004 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 and 25-27 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6 and 24-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Minar et al. [Visualizing the Crowds at a Web Site].

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Regarding claim 1, Minar teach *a method for navigating the Internet and for facilitating user socialization at web sites* (Abstract), *the method being utilized in a computer networking system having one or more central processing units, one or more memories, and one or more network connections* (World Wide Web as disclosed in the INTRODUCTION implies a computer networking system having one or more central processing units, one or more memories, and one or more network connections), the method comprising steps of:

creating at least one instance of a mapping data structure for a web site (visualizing the crowd on a web site is an instance of a mapping spatial structure of MIT Media Lab Web Site, VISUALIZATION), *the data structure representing two or more categories, each of the categories divided into subcategories of ordered levels of specificity, each of the ordered levels of specificity being a grouping of subcategories of the same levels of specificity* (the mapping spatial structure represents groups of web pages as categories, e.g., author's pages and Software Agents pages, group is subdivided into subgroups as subcategories of ordered levels of specificity, e.g., research group page, personal page..., research group page as the ordered levels of specificity being a grouping of subcategories of the same levels of specificity with personal page);

generating a graphical representation of said at least one instance of said mapping data structure (CROWD VISUALIZATION); and

mapping information about people, activities, and social interactions at the web site onto said graphical representation (the circles as in CROWD VISUALIZATION represent people near the documents they are currently visiting, VISUALIZATION, and popular groups of pages on the web site are visibly crowded with people jostling around as they move

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from page to page, and seldom-visited portions of the site are identifiable by faded color, CROWD DYNAMICS).

Regarding claims 25-27, Minar teaches a computer system and program for executing the method of visualizing the crowds at a web site by:

creating an instance of a mapping data structure for a given web site (visualizing the crowd on a web site is an instance of a mapping spatial structure of MIT Media Lab Web Site, VISUALIZATION), *the data structure representing two or more categories by dividing each of the categories into subcategories of ordered levels of specificity; dividing each of the ordered levels of specificity into a grouping of subcategories of the same levels of specificity* (the mapping spatial structure represents groups of web pages as categories, e.g., author's pages and Software Agents pages, group is subdivided into subgroups as subcategories of ordered levels of specificity, e.g., research group page, personal page..., research group page as the ordered levels of specificity being a grouping of subcategories of the same levels of specificity with personal page); and

displaying the subcategories and the grouping of subcategories in a visual, geometric pattern (CROWD VISUALIZATION); and

mapping information about people, activities, and social interactions at the web site onto said visual, geometric pattern (the circles as in CROWD VISUALIZATION represent people near the documents they are currently visiting, VISUALIZATION, and popular groups of pages on the web site are visibly crowded with people jostling around as they move from page to page, and seldom-visited portions of the site are identifiable by faded color, CROWD DYNAMICS).

Regarding claim 2, Minar teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, Minar further discloses *the data structure includes one or more sections, the sections being logical intersections of one of the categories with one of the levels of specificity (e.g., /people/nelson as in SITE MAP).*

Regarding claim 5, Minar teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, Minar further discloses *the categories include any one or more of the following: a product category, a service category, a category class, a category list, a product class, a list of products in a class, a product specification, a service class, a list of services, and a service specification (SITE MAP).*

Regarding claim 6, Minar teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, Minar further discloses *the levels of specificity include any one or more of the following: category class, category list, offering specification, product class, list of products in a class, product specification, service class, list of services, and a service specification (SITE MAP).*

Regarding to claim 24, Minar teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, Minar further discloses *the social information mapped in the data structure is served over one or more of the network connections for display of one or more visual districts on one or more clients (INDIVIDUALS and CROWD VISUALIZATION).*

Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minar et al. [Visualizing the Crowds at a Web Site] in view of Hazlehurst et al. [USP 6,289,353 B1].

Regarding claim 3, Minar teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 2, but does not explicitly teach *one or more subcategories have a degree of closeness relating the section to one or more other sections*. Hazlehurst teaches *one or more subcategories have a degree of closeness relating the section to one or more other sections* (Hazlehurst, FIG. 10A-B, Cols. 12-13). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Minar method by including the degree of closeness as taught by Hazlehurst in order to represent the data sets of major areas of interest in specific details representing by subcategories.

Regarding claim 4, Minar and Hazlehurst, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 3, Hazlehurst further discloses *the degree of closeness relates to any one or more of following: a physical closeness of location of physical items represented by the respective sections, a relational closeness between one or more users and one or more objects, a relational closeness between one or more users, a semantic closeness of descriptions of items represented by the respective sections, and a behavioral closeness of pattern of use* (Hazlehurst, FIG. 10A-B, Cols. 12-13).

Claims 7-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minar et al. [Visualizing the Crowds at a Web Site] in view of Nortel et al. [WebQuery: Searching and Visualizing the Web through Connectivity].

Regarding claim 7, Minar teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, but does not explicitly disclose the step of *collecting information about one or more nodes located on one or more of the districts*. Nortel teaches a method for searching and visualizing the Web, Nortel further discloses the step of *collecting information about one or more nodes located on one or more of the districts* (Nortel, pages 5-7). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Minar method by including the step of collecting information about one or more nodes as taught by Nortel in order to represent the data sets of major areas of interest in specific details representing by subcategories.

Regarding claim 8, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 7, Nortel further discloses *the nodes are differentiated by any one or more node functions* (Nortel, pages 5-6).

Regarding claim 9, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 8, Minar further discloses *the node functions include any one or more of the following: initiating a chat session, providing information, causing a user to be associated with a node location, providing access to sales*

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information, providing access to a salesman, and changing a browser page to one that has information relating to the node (Minar, INTRODUCTION).

Regarding claim 10, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 7, and the MIT Media Lab Web Site as disclosed by Minar is *one or more of the nodes is a landmark that marks a salient location on one or more of the districts.*

Regarding claim 11, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 10, and the MIT Media Lab Web Site as disclosed by Minar is *the salient location is fixed and associated with one of a plurality of business categories.*

Regarding claim 12, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 10, and the MIT Media Lab Web Site as disclosed by Minar is *the salient location can change in time and is associated with an activity.*

Regarding claim 13, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 12, Minar further discloses *the activity is one or more of the following: a current "hot spot", "a list of most popular pages in a computer section", a public chat, a sale, a special product offering, a special service offering, and a sales agent availability* (Minar, SITE MAP).

Regarding claim 14, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 10, Minar further discloses *the salient location is personally meaningful to the user* (Minar, CROWD VISUALIZATION).

Regarding claim 15, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 14, the MIT Media Lab Web Site as disclosed by Minar is *the salient location represents any one or more of the following: a user's buddy, a chat buddy, a private chat, a user's favorite spot, and a user with common interest*.

Regarding claim 16, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 7, and the claimed *the system comprising one or more paths, each path connecting two or more nodes* is an inherent feature of World Wide Web.

Regarding claim 17, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 16, and the claimed *the path links two or more of the nodes to associate connectivity relationships among the nodes* is an inherent feature of World Wide Web.

Regarding claim 18, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 16, and the claimed *a path is*

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associated with one of the following: a user's path through one or more of the districts, a customer's path through one or more of the districts, a preferred path of a group of users through one or more of the districts, a preferred path of a group of users with common interests through one or more of the districts, and a preferred path of a group of users with complementary interests through one or more of the districts is an inherent feature of World Wide Web.

Regarding claim 19, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 7, Nortel further discloses *one or more node sets, each node set contain, ning one or more nodes clustered in nearby locations in one or more of the districts* (Nortel, pages 3-5).

Regarding claim 20, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 19, Nortel further discloses *a node set represent a relationship among two or more nodes located in one or more of the districts* (Nortel, pages 3-5).

Regarding claim 21, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 19, Nortel further discloses *where one or more of the node sets is associated with one of the following: a density of users gathered in one or more adjacent node locations, a set of node locations marking results of a search, a set of node locations related by a semantic attribute, a set of node locations visited by a group of users with common interests, a set of node locations visited by a group of users with complementary interests, and a crowd of users* (Nortel, pages 3-5).

Regarding claim 22, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 19, Nortel further discloses *one or more of the node sets has a node set function* (Nortel, pages 3-5).

Regarding claim 23, Minar and Nortel, in combination, teach all of the claimed subject matter as discussed above with respect to claim 22, Minar further discloses *the node set function includes any one or more of the following: providing information about the set, changing a user's location to be associated with a node location in the set, and changing browser page to one that has information relating to a node in the set* (Minar, SITE MAP).


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to HUNG Q PHAM whose telephone number is 571-272-4040. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, JOHN E BREENE can be reached on 571-272-4107. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Examiner Hung Pham
March 15, 2005


SHAHID ALAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER